

16: Müller--230

U-3

(no date) 1910

Formosan Aborigines

116, 561, 646

In all those tribes where there is a tendency toward autonomy, there is a marked division according to age levels among the men who hold the vote.

22: Wiedfeldt--15-16
646

F-5

(1913) 1914

Formosan Aborigines
Atayal

The chief of the tribe sets a day for the gathering of the chiefs of the clans, and also for catching fish in the large river. It is in the fall, when the trout has reached its full growth and the millet is ripe. Every clan sends at least one representative, and the women and children [16] also come.

22: Wiedfeldt--31 [3] F-5
116, 646, 622, 202

(1913) 1914

Formosan Aborigines
Atayal

The full assembly of all clan heads and honorary chiefs meets at the invitation of the tribal chief. The time and the place, in case it should be held somewhere else but in the hut of the tribal chief, as well as the agenda, are announced to the nearest clan heads by swift runners. These clan heads, in turn, similarly inform the clan heads who live near them.

22: Wiedfeldt--32 F-5
116, 646, 527, 484, 576

(1913) 1914

Formosan Aborigines
Atayal

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This koto-kumai-roh, or common council [MC: the full assembly of all clan heads of the tribe and honorary chiefs]... meets as a rule at the time of the millet harvest. It begins early in the morning, since most of the clan heads have used the previous day for traveling, and it lasts one to three hours. Connected with it are the community fishing expedition, which supplies the food, and on the next morning, the tribal millet festival. The chief of the tribe opens, conducts, and closes the meeting. He presents the agenda briefly, and then yields the floor to such honorary chiefs and then such clan heads as have something to say. While someone is talking, all the others listen attentively in silence, without interrupting him in any way. Each individual speaks only a few minutes, for it is considered improper to take a long time to express one's opinion.

22: Wiedfeldt--32 [2]
116, 643, 646, 721

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(1913) 1914

Formosan Aborigines
Atayal

The negotiations [MC: carried on in an Atayal tribal assembly called koto-kumai-roh] concern political and military affairs. The koto-kumai-roh makes the decisions and confers upon the tribal chief the necessary powers, according to which he acts. The assembly has nothing to do with his judicial powers. Nevertheless, the assembly takes this opportunity to question the clan heads concerned in any infraction of the law that has taken place, and on their confession, a penalty is imposed or a skull hunt is ordered. Decisions are for the most part made unanimously. Otherwise, voting is by rising from the squatting position. A simple majority decides, and the vote of the tribal chief is used to break a tie. In general, a minority is bound by the decision. In the tribes of the interior, which have not yet had any fights with the Japanese, only those clans are said to take part in a fight whose heads have voted for it, while the other clans remain at home, but are not permitted to give aid to the enemy.

22: Wiedfeldt--49-50
116, 622, 623, 643, 646

F-5

(1913) 1914

Formosan Aborigines-1-2
Atayal

Even more than the family needs a head do the populous institutions of the clan and the tribe need a head to direct them and act for them, for a large number of persons can only act through a representative. In addition, they also need, since they include many people, a body which will express and put into effect the will of the community. Since the dekan [MC: hunting association composed of several clans] lacks both bodies, it is not a social organism, but only a start in that direction. In the clan, this inclusive assembly consists of the heads of all the families, and the bachelors who have been tattooed. In the tribe, it consists of the clan heads and the honorary chiefs. The modern method of selecting the most suitable persons to represent the rest of the population by some kind of electoral procedure is unknown to the Atayals, even in the tribe, where it would be possible. Just as the head of the family represents the family in the clan, [50] so the hereditary heads of the clans are the natural representatives of the members of their clans in the tribal assembly. All the representatives to the assemblies have equal rights. Anyone who is absent is not counted, not even as a negative vote... This would be unnecessary anyway, for among the Atayals, everyone appears. The full assemblies have the authority to make decisions, and they pass on all matters of a general nature. The will of the totality is recognized by the mechanical means of a simple majority. If there is a tie between two opinions, the chief has the decisive voice.

If a resolution is passed, the chief is empowered and obligated to put it into effect, for example, a clan head may be authorized to buy a certain piece of land at a set price,

22: Wiedfeldt--49-50
116, 622, 623, 643, 646

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Formosan Aborigines-2
Atayal

or a tribal chief may be authorized to carry on negotiations with the Japanese concerning the changes in the Aiyu line. The not unfamiliar contrast between representative and constituent has been rendered impossible among the Atayals by restricting the representative to limited powers. The clan assembly can hold the hereditary head of the clan responsible for voting as it desires in the tribal assembly, for as a rule the clan assembly precedes, and it does so. The corporate body does not relinquish its exclusive right to make decisions even under unfavorable circumstances.

22: Wiedfeldt--52[2]
116, 622, 623, 643, 646

F-5

(1913) 1914

Formosan Aborigines
Atayal

The Atayals possess, in addition to the family, two higher grades of social organizations [MC: ie. the clan and the tribe] with a clearly defined and suitable distribution of functions to both institutions. Each one of them has the two indispensable spokesmen: the assembly of the whole and the head, between whom the powers have up to now been adequately divided.